

looked last night in the scarlet and gold of an English officer.

Yes, decidedly he is handsome, and of a fine presence—clever, too, which is best of all—man is nothing if not intellectual. It does not so much signify in women—it is not expected of them; people who ought to know say they are better without too much mind, but men—oh! a man should be strong and brave, gentle and tender, upright and generous, and true of heart. All this M. Longworth is, she knows; has she not had proof of it? How grateful, for example is that blind girl; how well Miss Harriott likes him—Miss Harriott incapable of liking anything selfish, or sordid, or mean.

How her haughty grandmother seeks and respects his opinion—her proud, imperious grandmother, who tolerates no advice nor interference from any one else. How strange that he should have had a grand passion for that *passee* Madame Sheldon. Do men really out-live and forget such things as that? He has told her he loves her, and he is a man of truth. That faint flush rises again as she recalls his looks, his words, the fire in the eyes that have gazed on her. They are extremely handsome eyes, and perhaps most handsome when anger as well as love flashes from them.

If she could only tell him all—but for the present that is hopeless, and he has promised to trust her. What is affection without trust, firm abiding faith and trust through all things. He must wait yet a little longer, and believe in her despite appearances, and meantime she is happy, and Baymouth is pleasant, and eighteen a delightful age, and love—Well, love, of course, “the very best thing in all the world.”

She wraps her shawl a little closer around her, for these September nights have a ring of sharpness, and watches a belated moon making its way through windy clouds up to the centre of the sky.

But Reine is neither lonely nor sad. All her presentiments and vexations are gone with the dead day, and she sings as she sits. And presently a step—a step she knows—come down the path behind her; but, though a new gladness comes into her eyes, she does not look round, but sings softly on.

The step ceases, he is beside her; he

has heard her song, but he does not speak. She turns and looks up, and to the day of her death never forgets the look his face wears. The smile fades from her lips, the gladness from her eyes; her singing ceases. She sits erect and gazes at him in consternation.

“What is it?” she asks, with a gasp.

“Very little,” he answers. His voice is low and stern, his face fixed and inflexible. “Very little, perhaps, in your eyes. Only this—I overheard you last night.”

For a moment she does not know what he means. Then it flashes upon her, and her face blanches.

“You mean——” she says, in a terrified voice.

“I mean your interview with Monsieur Leonce Durand in Miss Harriott’s garden last night. I did not go out eavesdropping. I went out honestly enough to smoke, but I chanced to overhear. I heard him claim the right to be with you. I heard him call you his wife!”

She utters a low, frightened cry, and turns from him and covers her face.

“Don’t be afraid,” he says, a touch of scorn in his tone; “I am not going to hurt you. I am not even going to reproach you. There is not much to be said between you and me; but, great heaven, how I have been deceived in you! I stand and look at you and am stunned by it. I thought I knew something of women and men; I thought, in my besotted self-conceit, I could read the soul in the face. I looked in yours that day on the deck of the ship and thought I saw a brave, frank, fearless heart, shining out of tender and truthful, and beautiful eyes. And the end is this!”

She does not speak a word. She sits like one stunned by a blow so sudden, so cruel so crushing, that it deadens feeling and speech.

“Your motive for what you have done,” he goes rapidly on, “is not so difficult to understand. You know that whatever shadow of chance you stood unmarried, you stood no shadow of chance married, and married to a Frenchman. You were naturally ambitious to obtain your rightful inheritance, and for the sake of that inheritance you have plotted, and schemed,